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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
PHOTOGRAPHIC INTELLIGENCE DIVISION  
PHOTOGRAPHIC INTELLIGENCE REPORT

EXPLOSIONS ASSOCIATED WITH CONSTRUCTION  
OF THE IRTYSH-KARAGANDA CANAL  
NEAR EKIBASTUZ, USSR

CIA/PIR-3009/65



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Approved For Release 2003/05/05 : CIA-RDP78T05161A000300010013-2

CIA, PHOTOGRAPHIC INTELLIGENCE DIVISION

EXPLOSIONS ASSOCIATED WITH CONSTRUCTION OF THE  
IRTYSH-KARAGANDA CANAL NEAR EKIBASTUZ, USSR

A study on the status of a proposed canal system linking the Irtysh River to the industrial city of Karaganda, 49-50N 73-10E, was made utilizing [ ] photography. A seismic event recorded on 25 April 1965 indicated that an underground explosion had taken place north of Ekibastuz at approximately 52N, 75E. Examination of coverage from [ ] confirmed that work on the canal was in progress and that explosives had been used.

The proposed route of the canal has been cited in various references. 1/, 2/, 3/ The canal route and construction status is shown by the overlay on the map of the area (Figure 1). It begins south of Yermak, runs westward to the Shiderty River, follows the Shiderty valley south through a planned series of reservoirs and pumping stations, and crosses the watershed to the Tuzdy and Nura River beds. The proposed route location from the Tuzdy reservoir south to Karaganda is not definite. The present limit of construction is in the Ekibastuz area, although one reservoir dam on the Shiderty River was found in place at 51-41N 74-37E.

The most recent construction activity is along an approximately 20 nautical mile length between Lake Karasor and Ekibastuz (Figure 2). There is evidence that excavation of the canal has been accomplished by both explosive and machine methods. The explosive excavations are recognized by the scatter of material resulting from the blast; the machine excavations by the embankment piles of removal material. The depth of the canal is at various levels, and it is possible that explosive charges are used in conjunction with mechanical methods to reach a desired depth. Likely areas for the 25 April blast would be in the area of shallow trenching or at one prominent unconnected segment which appears to be located in hard rock. No evidence of charges in place could be seen.

East of Lake Karasor to the Yermak area (Figure 3), the canal excavation appears essentially complete. A small portion of it was covered by snow. Explosives were probably used at various areas in this older section also, but they are more difficult to distinguish due to reworking and smoothing of the banks. The total length of the canal where construction has taken place is approximately 70 nautical miles.

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REFERENCES

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MAPS AND CHARTS

- ACIC. USAF Operationsl Navigation Chart, Sheet ONC-E-6, 1st Classified Ed., December 1961, Scale 1:1,000,000 (Confidential)
- AMS. Series DESPA-1, Sheet NM 43-2, 1st Ed., December 1963, Scale 1:250,000 (Top Secret)
- AMS. Series DESPA-1, Sheet NN 43-12, 1st Ed., January 1962, Scale 1:250,000 (Top Secret)

DOCUMENTS

1. Abstract #952, "The Irtysh Will Flow to Karaganda", Ekonomicheskaya gazeta, Moskva 30 April 1962, p. 35 (Unclassified)
2. Water Table and Ground Water Plat, Atlas of Tseliniy Kray, Moscow, 1964 (Unclassified)
3. Abstract #794, "Great Destiny for the Irtysh", Kazakhstanskaya pravda, Alma-Ata, No. 262, 6 November 1962, p. 2 (Official Use Only)

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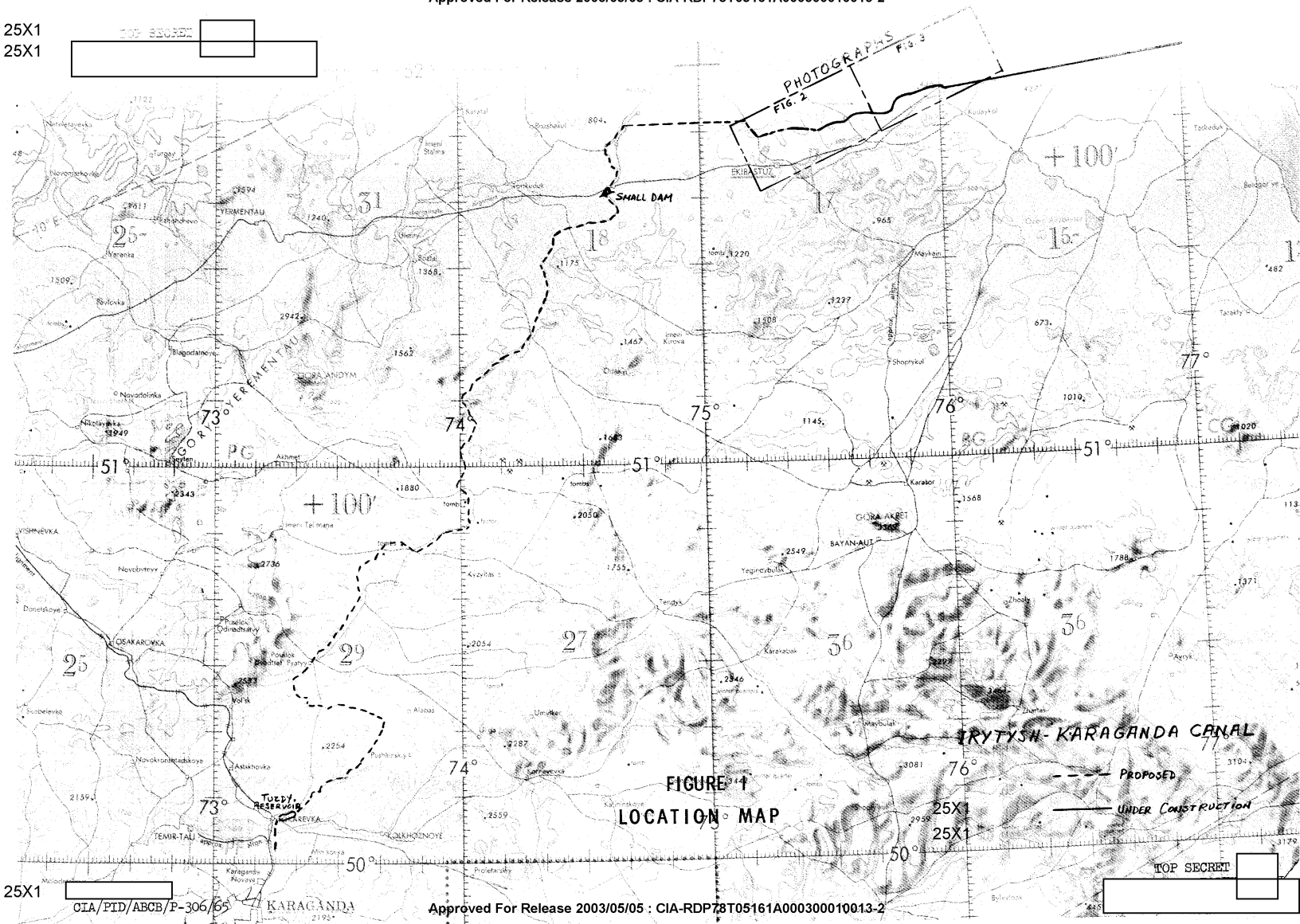
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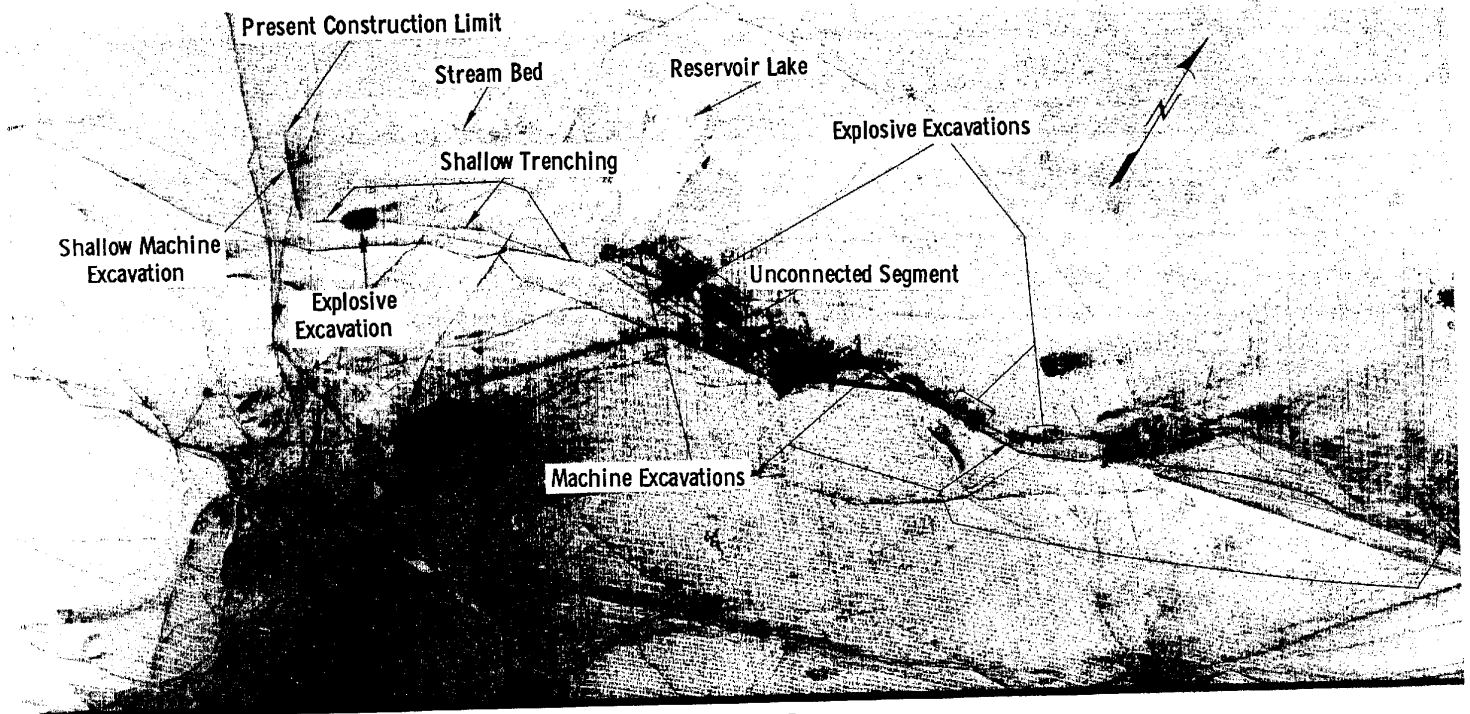
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FIGURE 2  
IRTYSH-KARAGANDA CANAL, NEWER SECTION



Ekibastuz Coal Mine

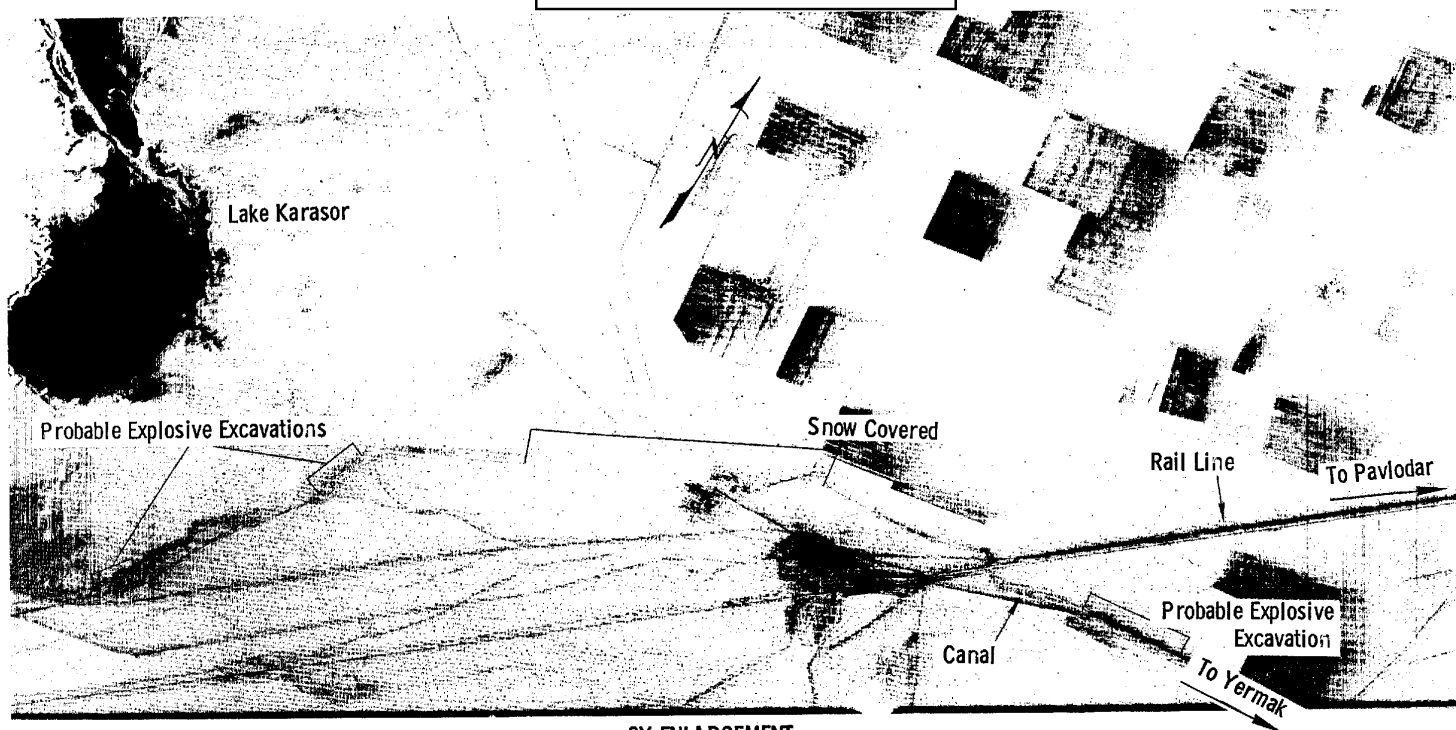
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FIGURE 3  
IRTYSH-KARAGANDA CANAL, OLDER SECTION



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